

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 15 and 16 as follows.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Withdrawn) Substantially pure growth differentiation factor-12 (GDF-12) and functional fragments thereof.
2. (Withdrawn) An isolated polynucleotide sequence encoding the GDF-12 polypeptide of claim 1.
3. (Withdrawn) The polynucleotide of claim 2, wherein the GDF-12 is selected from the group consisting of:
 - a) SEQ ID NO:13, wherein T can also be U;
 - b) nucleic acid sequences complementary to SEQ ID NO:13; and
 - c) fragments of a) or b) that are at least 15 bases in length and that will selectively hybridize to DNA which encodes the GDF-12 protein of SEQ ID NO:14.
4. (Withdrawn) The polynucleotide of claim 2, wherein the polynucleotide is isolated from a mammalian cell.
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Withdrawn) An expression vector including the polynucleotide of claim 2.
7. (Cancelled)

8. (Withdrawn) The vector of claim 5, wherein the vector is a virus.

9. (Withdrawn) A host cell stably transformed with the vector of claim 6.

Claims 10 to 11 (Cancelled)

12. (Withdrawn) Antibodies that bind to the polypeptide of claim 1 or fragments thereof.

Claims 13 to 14 (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A method of detecting malignant cells comprising contacting an antibody that specifically binds to a growth differentiation factor-12 (GDF-12) polypeptide having consisting of an amino acid sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 12 with a specimen of a subject suspected of having cancer, and detecting binding of the antibody, and comparing the amount of GDF-12 detected in the sample with an amount in a control specimen, wherein a difference in the sample as compared to control is indicative of malignant cells.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein the ~~cell is a~~ cells are liver ~~cell~~ cells.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the detecting is *in vivo*.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein the antibody is detectably labeled.

Claims 19 to 22 (Cancelled)

23. (Withdrawn) A method of treating a cell proliferative disorder associated with expression of growth differentiation factor-12 (GDF-12), comprising contacting the cells with a reagent which suppresses GDF-12 activity.

24. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the reagent is an anti-GDF-12 antibody.

25. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the reagent is a GDF-12 antisense sequence.

26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the cell is a liver cell.

27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the reagent which suppresses GDF-12 activity is introduced to a cell using a vector.

28. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the vector is a colloidal dispersion system.

29. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 23, wherein the colloidal dispersion system is a liposome.

Claims 30 to 36 (Cancelled)

37. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 27, wherein the vector is a virus.

Claims 38 to 43 (Cancelled)